

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 1 and replaces original Fig. 1.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and following remarks.

Claims 1-11 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 9 are amended and new claims 10 and 11 are added. No new matter has been added. Support for the new claims can be found at least in Applicants' as-filed specification at paragraph [0014].

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the May, 2009 telephone discussions. The substance of the discussions are incorporated into the amendments and remarks herein and constitute Applicants' record of the discussions.

The Office Action rejects claim 9 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. Claim 9 is amended to address the Examiner's concerns.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 9 under 35 USC § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,357,062 to *Morel et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,448,033 to *Leone et al.*; and rejects claims 1-9 under 35 USC § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 4,401,863 to *Lemmer et al.* in view of *Leone*. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' independent claim 1 recites, in combination with other claimed features, a switching device comprising one or more gas flow openings in a frame between the interior and the exterior of the frame and arranged for a gas flow produced by a switching event. Such features encompass Applicants' exemplary embodiment as illustrated in Fig. 1 wherein first connector 4 and second connector 6 are provided inside frame 2 with means for electrically connecting 8 the first and second connector. Gas flow openings 10 and 11 are provided in the frame between

an interior and an exterior of the frame to allow the gas flow between the inner part of the frame and the surrounding environment of the frame. This feature is not disclosed in any of the cited references.

Instead, *Morel* discloses a case 8, connection terminals 7a, 7b and a rotary contact 3 for connecting the connecting terminals to one another. However, the switching device of *Morel* does not include any gas flow openings provided between the interior and exterior of the frame and arranged for a gas flow produced by the switching event. A review of *Morel's* specification indicates that there is no discussion of gas flow. The only openings appear to be for attachment to another device.

Lemmer discloses a housing portion 1, 2, contact bars 3, 4 and contact bridge 18. *Lemmer* does not include any discussion of gas flow produced by switching event. The figures of *Lemmer* do not depict any gas flow opening provided in the housing between and interior of the housing and an exterior of the housing arranged for a gas flow produced by a switching event, nor is there any discussion of such in the specification.

Applicants' independent claim 9 recites, in combination with other claimed features, a switching device comprising a frame having a gas flow opening provided between an interior and an exterior of the frame and adapted for a gas flow produced by the switching event to exit the switching device. As discussed above, this feature is not disclosed in either the *Morel* or *Lemmer* patents.

The *Leone* patent does not overcome the deficiencies of the *Morel* and *Lemmer* patents discussed above.

The dependent claims are allowable for at least the features discussed above as well as for the individual features they recite. For example, new dependent claims 10 and 11 each recite a part of the frame adjacent to the connectors provided with a through-hole for a gas flow corresponding with the hole of the first connector. These features are not disclosed in any of the applied references.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment or the application in general, she is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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